Support for VRA Extension

The Administration is supporting ongressional efforts to extend the Veterans Readjustment Appointment (VRA) program until September 30, 1983. The current statutory authority for the VRA program expires September 30, 1981. OPM has issued FPM Bulletin 307-15 (June 4, 1981) entitled "Support for Extension of the Veterans Readjustment Appointment (VRA) Program," urging Federal agencies to continue using the VRA authority pending final approval of the extension.

The VRA program provides eligible veterans with training and employment during a transition period. A total of 21,672 Vietnam era veterans were hired under the VRA program in 1980, the highest number of annual hires since President Nixon began the program in 1970. Of VRA hires in 1980, 2,114 or 10 percent were women, and 8,249 or 38 percent were minorities. Most of the appointments were made by the Defense agencies and the Veterans Administration.

Spotlight

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FEORP in Action at INS

In the fall of 1979, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) began working on its Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program plan. Analysis of INS' major occupations, through determinations of underrepresentation, led to special recruitment efforts in the border patrol agent, immigration inspector/immigration examiner, attorney, and analyst occupations. Analyst occupations were considered as one group which included the budget analyst, computer specialist, management ana-'yst, and program analyst series.

Entry level border patrol agent positions are filled through an Office of Personnel Management register. In the fall of 1979, OPM began preparations to announce the border patrol agent examination. The announcement was opened from March 10–31, 1980. Targeted recruitment efforts were directed toward attracting minority and female candidates for the examination. Recruiting teams were composed of border patrol agents, immigration inspectors and immigration examiners, personnel specialists, EEO specialists, criminal investigators, administrative specialists and officers, immigration detention officers, and EEO collateral duty coordinators.

Recruitment teams visited or contacted military installations, military separation centers and reserve units, sheriff's departments, Indian reservations, minority and women's organizations, church and civic organizations, and educational institutions with criminal justice programs. A slide presentation depicting the formal training program and some aspects of the work performed by border patrol agents in the field was developed for use at presentations to the organizations. Visits were made to other Federal agencies as sources of potential candidates. All employees of INS were contacted by memo and encouraged to apply for the examination. Targeted recruitment efforts were directed at nearly 200 radio and television stations, newspapers, and special interest newsletters serving large minority populations. One recruiter developed a newspaper and radio advertising campaign to publicize the examination. As a result of these activities, copies of the announcement were requested and posted by community organizations and church groups for their membership to see.

INS received an estimated 600 phone calls during the two weeks following the publicity. Callers were advised of the qualification requirements and the need to relocate to the southern border. Invitations were extended to callers to attend an orientation session at a local district office. Approximately 116 individuals submitted applications following the orientation.

It is estimated that approximately 12,000 people took the May 1980 examination. The results of the examination show the following:

5,672	Passed, including:
730	Blacks
2,257	Hispanics
81	Asians
114	American Indians
665	Women

INS' personnel organization is studying the composition of the certificates issued from the OPM register to determine how successful recruitment efforts were in attracting women and minorities. The findings will be used to assist

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From the Desk of

A. DIANE GRAHAM, OPM Assistant Director for Affirmative Employment Programs

I think it is important that we have a chance to surface some of the issues that are smoldering under the surface regarding the Administration's approach to EEO. My observation is that a lot of people are leaping to conclusions that they don't have a basis for yet. And I say yet because they could come to be true. While I do not claim to be an official speaker for the Administration, I have observed signals that EEO has not been abandoned, but will continue, perhaps with alteration in methodology. Several recent activities by the current Administration may be indicative of what's to come:

- A bank debarment by the OFCCP, under Secretary of Labor Ray Donovan, is the strongest compliance enforcement measure yet against a bank.
- The Justice Department has continued its vigorous argument for numerical goals and timetables in the case against Fairfax County, VA. A court order for injunctive relief is pending.
- After reviewing the PACE case settlement negotiated by the previous Administration, the current Administration changed the base of numerical goals arrived at, but maintained numerical goals. Goals based on applicant flow in each separate Federal agency across the nation are more flexible and better adapted to variations in minority populations than the previous Administration's proposal of an across-the-board 20 percent goal for all Federal agencies in all locations.
- In its first affirmative action consent decree under the current Administration, the Justice Department has required that Statesville, NC set a long-term goal of 18 percent Blacks in its police and fire departments, accelerate promotions of Blacks and pay $20,500 to a Black firefighter whose EEO complaint launched a Justice Department suit.

I note these actions as indicator of support for effective and fair enforcement of EEO laws.

Several weeks ago the Washington Area FEORP Clearinghouse had a meeting in which the invited speakers were George Strauss and Nat Scurry from OMB. Nat Scurry is the Civil Rights Coordinator for OMB, governmentwide. Some of the questions, as you can imagine, that came up were, "What's ahead for EEO? What about EEO?" Mr. Strauss went to great pains to say that OMB is supportive of affirmative action and EEO and the OMB has been meeting with representatives of constitutent organizations to confirm OMB commitment to affirmative action concerns.

The kind of guidance I have received from my boss, Don Devine, has been that we should emphasize that there are things that work and there are efforts that we know will be fruitful. In my view, that means that we should place more, not less, emphasis on FEORP and affirmative action execution. Even when hiring is reduced, there is no reason to think all bets are off, or that agencies can sit back and relax in regard to their affirmative action obligations. There will still be hiring. Federal agencies must have affirmative action in mind when they are hiring five people just as much as when they are hiring hundreds.

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in developing future recruitment strategies.

INS also targeted the immigration inspector/immigration examiner occupation for concentrated recruiting efforts. While hiring restraints limited the number of positions that could be filled during the year, affirmative recruitment strategies were used in those instances where vacancies were to be filled. Employees in one region were given the opportunity to try a new career on a trial basis. Competitive details were established and employees were selected for immigration inspector positions during the summer season. Program participants were assigned to land ports of entry where they performed immigration inspector or examiner duties.

At the end of the detail, the employees returned to their regular positions with a new experience that provided qualifications for entry level immigration inspector or examiner positions. Other staffing methods used were the Cooperative Education program and the Upward Mobility program. During this period 57 immigration inspector positions were filled from the OPM register, 15 through Upward Mobility and 7 through the Cooperative Education program.

For further information on the INS recruitment program contact Paul Vayo, Staffing and Manpower Planning Programs Branch, on (202) 633-2742.

Career Development Program for Mentally Retarded Employees

by Kathleen McSweeney, Department of Education

In 1979, the Director of the Division of Personnel Administration established a Task Force for Mentally Retarded Employees to address the special problems and needs of these employees within the former U.S. Office of Education. The Task Force, chaired by the Director of the Office of Handicapped Concerns, Chet Avery, focused on four major issues confronting the mentally retarded employees. The major problem areas were identified as (1) the classification of positions at grade-sustaining levels, (2) the lack of support services, (3) conversion from Schedule A appointment to competitive civil service, and (4) the responsibilities of a selective placement coordinator.

Following a survey and training session for all supervisors of mentally retarded employees and individual interviews with the employees themselves, the Task Force prepared a report outlining the issues and suggesting solutions to problems faced by the employees and their supervisors. This report was shared with the supervisors, representatives of the Labor Relations staff, EEO staff, and Local 2607.

The recommendations included the provision of vocational assessment for use in career planning, and identification of areas in which positive functioning and training needs may be identified. Recommendation #3 stated, in part, "The Horace Mann Learning Center, in conjunction with the selective placement coordinator and vocational rehabilitation counselor, should develop an individualized career development plan for each mentally retarded employee.... Since vocational assessment of Schedule A(t) employees has not been made or re-evaluated since initial placements, it is recommended that provisions for vocational re-evaluation be effected for use in career planning."

As a result of this report, the Career Counseling Unit of the Horace Mann Learning Center and the Office of Handicapped Concerns instituted a program of career development to provide continuous supportive counseling, assessment, and training of the mentally retarded employees. These employees, who have worked primarily as copy machine operators, mail room clerks, and messengers, and have been with HEW/ED for an average of eight years, are at grade levels GS-2 and 3. In light of their established work histories, assessment is needed to determine the possible areas for training which can translate into functions on the job.

Goodwill Industries has been chosen as the evaluation/training center to be used for this program. Vocational assessments will be conducted on each employee which will include psychological assessments, interest and career exploration, and work samples. A summary of findings in each of the above areas will be submitted to the Education Department and potential training areas will be identified. Training for employees with

see **ED,** *page 4*

Spotlight

Writer: Catherine Penn
Editor: Nathaniel M. Deutsch

The Director of the United States of America Office of Personnel Management has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of public business required by law of this agency. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the Director, Office of Management and Budget through May 30, 1982.

OPM Schedules PACE for Fall 1981

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) plans to administer the nationwide Professional and Administrative Career Examination (PACE) between October 28 and December 12, 1981.

OPM Job Information Centers will accept applications from September 14 through October 13 to take the test. Applications received before or after that date will be returned without action.

Specific testing dates will be set by OPM regional offices. Individual applicants will be notified as to when and where they will be taking the written test.

A proposed settlement of a lawsuit concerning the PACE, if given final approval by the court, will require a gradual phasing out of the PACE over the next three years. Alternative examination procedures will be developed for occupations now filled from PACE registers. OPM is in the process of developing a proposed schedule for removing occupations from PACE coverage, but PACE will be used until new procedures are in place.

CORRECTION

In the March-April 1981 issue of SPOTLIGHT, the title given for the new publication by the Interagency Minority and Female Recruiters Association (IMFRA) was incorrect. The correct title is **How to Get a Job in the Federal Government.** Copies are available from Mollie Awkard, Office of the Inspector General, USDA, 12th and Independence Ave., S.W., Administration Building, room 17E, Washington, DC 20250. A Spanish version of this booklet is being prepared.

This IMFRA publication should not be confused with the new fourth edition of a book published for the Federal Research Service, Inc., entitled **How to Get a Federal Job and Advance,** by David E. Waelde.

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identified potential will be given in the areas of general clerical, mail room clerical, accounting clerical and other areas offering increased career opportunities for employees who currently have positions at the GS-2 or 3 level.

Participants will attend the assessment and training programs for two out of five days per week until the training is completed. There will be on the job follow-up in the Education Department to assure that the newly acquired skills are put to use in the actual work situation.

The Education Department has taken an important first step in providing career development for this all-too-often neglected group of employees. A program of career development for mentally retarded employees can enhance employee morale, increase the understanding of supervisors, identify areas for job improvement and expansion, and contribute toward a more satisfied and productive worker.

Approximately 25 ED employees are participating in this program, and as far as is known this is the first such formal training program within the Federal government.

For further information on the program contact the Project Coordinator, Kathleen McSweeney, Office of Handicapped Concerns, on (202) 245-0873 or 472-5207.

Calendar of Summer Conventions

The following information is provided as a service to the SPOTLIGHT audience. Federal agencies may wish to use this information in planning affirmative recruitment activities in connection with the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP).

Date	Convention	Location
July:		
7–11	Persons United to Save Humanity (PUSH) (312) 373-3366	Chicago, IL
12–16	Disabled Amer. Vets (DAV) (202) 554-3501	Miami, FL
15–19	Federally Employed Women (FEW) (202) 638-4404	Indianapolis, IN
19–22	Nat'l Urban League (212) 310-9000	Washington, DC
22–24	Mexican American Women's Nat'l Association (MANA) (202) 632-5663	Washington, DC
August:		
1–8	Amvets (202) 223-9550	Louisville, KY
3–9	American GI Forum of the United States (915) 772-1442	Dallas, TX
11–14	Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) (404) 522-1420	New Orleans, LA
11–15	Blinded Vets Assn. (202) 347-4010	Arlington, VA
14–20	Vets of Foreign Wars (VFW) (202) 543-2239	Philadelphia, PA
19–21	Nat'l Council of La Raza (202) 293-4680	San Antonio, TX
25–28	Blacks in Government (202) 436-7211	Washington, DC

Please contact these organizations directly for further information on agenda, registration procedures, cost, and actual conference site.

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